

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, September 21. 1708.

Review.

IF my mad Man be as good as his Word, I am to have something very ill-natur'd to day about our Thanksgivings in this Nation; and tho' I am not yet sure we shall be often troubled with Occasions of publick Thanksgivings, yet I am very willing, our Practice should be suitable to the Nature of a Day of Thanksgiving, and to the Temper of Thankfulness.

Mad Man. I have never fail'd you yet, when you have wanted me, and I see no Reason to fail you now; I am at your hand, Sir, and if you have any thing to say to justify your Manner of Thanksgivings, pray let me hear it.

Rev. No, no, let us first hear what you have to say against it—

M. I have more to say against it, than you imagine, I believe.

Rev. I cannot imagine of what Kind your Objections are; I hope, you are not going to cavil at her Majesty's Procession to St. Paul's, and the singing *Te Deum*, the Musick, the Organs, &c. these Things have been often enough debated already, and You and I are not likely to settle the Point; besides, you'll only bring the *Rehearsal* on your Back, for tho' you know, he himself damns the whole Church as Schismatical, yet he, *God bless her*, is the only Defender she has left in this Age of her Mortification.

M. Indeed you mistake me quite, I don't quarrel any Peoples Form of giving Thanks, provided they do but really give Thanks; the *Organs*, or the *Musick*, or the Firing

Firing the *Guns* at the *Te Deum*, gives me no Offence; if *Te Deum* be sincerely in their Hearts, I am content—So they do but really praise GOD, let every one do it their own Way; if I had my Senses again, I would give Thanks my own Way, and never reproach others with doing it a differing way from me, so they were but thankful; 'tis Want of the Essentials of Thanksgiving, and supplying with something essentially contrary to the very Nature of giving Thanks, and to the Nature of him you give Thanks to, that I quarrel at—And therefore Brother Rehearsal and I need not clash here; besides He and I are CHUMS, and both of a Class, he is a Member of our College, and has been so many Years—and mad Men never quarrel with one another; as for the Church of England being defended by mad Men, that Part of her which he defends can be defended by no other, therefore you need not wonder at it at all—

Rev. Well then, you have nothing at all to say against her Majesty's Procession to the Cathedral, you promise me that.

M. Not a Word, I wish all your People were as hearty in giving Thanks to GOD, as her Majesty has given us Reason to believe *She is*—Indeed I could say, *it were to be wish'd*, there was not so many of the principal Inhabitants and Heads of Families of the City kept out of the Church by the Forms of that Day, and by Consequence of the People too: But these common publick Solemnities are not without their Uses, and my Objections do not lie *that way*, I am not so nice as you imagine.

But will you tell me, for being Lunatick you know I have lost my Memory, what are the true Methods of a Nation's expressing their Thankfulness to Almighty GOD, in Cases of great Mercies receiv'd, and what Precedents can you show me, I mean, such as are to be justified and imitated?

Rev. It is not my Turn to preach, nor am I qualified; but if you will have brief Heads, take them thus;

1. Publick Appearing in the Place of Worship, where we are first to acknowledge all our good Things from him, and next acknowledge them all to him;

this is call'd Honouring GOD, *He that offers Praise glorifies me*, and is call'd in Foreign Lands at this Time, *Action de Grace*.

2. A Temper suited to Thanksgiving, which I will not pretend to describe, but you have it in very few Words, in 2 Psalm, 11 verse.
3. Charity to the Poor, an old Practice antient as the Institution of GOD's Church among the Jews, who on the Days of their Festivals were to send Portions to the Fatherless and Widow, and to such for whom Nothing was provided.

M. What, is this all you have to say? Is there no other Work for a Day of Thanksgiving?

Rev. I could name you some Scripture-Examples, as of the Children of Israel singing Songs of Praise, Solomon's Dedication of the Temple, of their solemn Days, of Sacrifices, and the like—

M. This is all nothing at all.

Rev. Then there was their publick Feasts, their new Moons, and solemn Assemblies—

M. Ay, ay, their Feasts, their Feasts, there I shall have it—And there I suppose, the Magistrates were always drunk, and sung, and swore, and sp—d, saving your Worship's Presence, to the Honour of the Occasion.

Rev. Nothing like it.

M. Well, but to be sure they drank Healths to their great Captains and Generals, such as Moses and Joshua, and sometimes to the Immortal Memory of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, no question they did that.

Rev. You are raving now indeed; these Things were not known then; the D—l had not carry'd on his Kingdom to such a Height.

M. How! Nor did they not drink a Health to the Tabernacle, or to the Urim and Thummim, to the Ark, or afterwards to the Temple?

Rev. It would have been notorious Blaphemy, and have been punish'd with immediate Death.

M. Why,

M. Why, do not some of our Magistrates do all these Things? Do not they roar, and be drunk, and swear, and blaspheme, and drink Healths to the Church, and Healths to the Protestant Religion? Certainly, these Things must be found, either in Precept or Example, in the Scripture as a Work proper for a Day of Thanksgiving, or else our Rulers, Justices, &c. nay, and Spiritual Guides too, would never do so.

Rev. Certainly you must be mistaken, or else they ought to have their Gowns putt'd over their Ears, and be made Examples. Do not be too positive, are you sure of the F. &?

M. Have you a Mind to have a black List? If you'll come to my Chamber in Bedlam, I'll show you a Catalogue of Names pasted up against my Wall; there I can read you the Men and the Crimes; there you have the Mayor of and Five of his Brethren, the very last Thanksgiving-Day at Night, so drunk, they could not find their Way home; there you have . . . and two Men of a Cloth drinking Healths to the Church of England, till they could be known to be of no Church but by their Out-sides, Devil Tavern, N°. (. . . .) there I can give you a List of some City Clubs of our first Rate Gentlemen, who having lately very worthily suppress'd Vice in Bartholomew-Fair, were giving Thanks in Claret for the Victory of Oudenard, till the Wine got the Victory over their Understandings, and they left us a sad Pattern of City Sobriety—And indeed, my Catalogue is so long, that it is not One, or Two, or Ten of your Papers will hold it.—There you have all the Thunder of their Oaths, the Irruptions of Blasphemy, and the Noise of Damnation, SO LOUD, the Canon at the Siege of Lisse is a Fool to it, for it reaches up to Heaven, and pierces not the Ears, but the Souls of honest Men.

Rev. This is a sad Story, and I doubt has too much Truth in it.

M. Now, since this is the general Method of our Thanksgiving, I appeal to all the World out of Bedlam to judge—And if it be really true, that this was not

the Method of giving Thanks in former Days, if there is no such Practice allow'd of in Scripture, I cannot imagine, what you think of your selves; as to your publick Thanksgivings, the QUEEN leads you to the Church, there you mock G O D a little with a Song, and pretend to praise him, and from thence you adjourn to the Taverns or to Feastings, and there in your more sincere Manner, you fly in his Face with all Manner of Excesses, insulting the Majesty of Heaven by Way of Thanksgiving, and calling upon him to damn you, instead of delivering you—What Drunkenness! What Reveling! What Deformity of Manners and Debauching of Morals, are the Practices of our Rejoycings, as if G O D were to be prais'd by the Help of the Devil, and to be wicked to Excess was the best Acknowledgment of his Goodness! If this be to give Thanks, if this be the Return you make to Heaven for his Mercies, and for delivering you, for disappointing Invasions, and giving you Victory, I know not what you say to it, Mr. Review, but I assure you, we in Bedlam think, 'tis the only Way to cause Heaven, in meer Mercy to you, to take away the Occasions of such Mockery, that such horrid Hypocrisie, and monstrous Affronts of his Majesty may not provoke him to turn your Joy into Sorrow, and see, whether you can be more sincere in your Days of Humiliation, than you are in your Thanksgiving.

Rev. You are gotten into a sad Story, O I care not to hear it—

M. Have I made out my Charge, am I as good as my Word?

Rev. Ay, ay, I acknowledge it— I beseech you give me Quarter, I am perfectly conquer'd, it is all true, too true— Publish it not in Gasb— The whole Nation ought to blush and be ashamed; but in Pity let us not enter into Particulars.

M. Well, I'll forbear that ungrateful Part; but I must give you another Part of this in my next, which perhaps may be of publick Use.

A D V E R.